

**King County Agriculture Commission  
Minutes from May 13, 2004  
Mercer View Community Center  
Mercer Island, WA**

Commissioners Present: Judy Duff, Michael Blakely, George Irwin, Roger Calhoon, Gaylia Bullock, Dick Gradwohl, Nancy Hutto, Jason Roetcisoender and Ben Kodama

Commissioners Absent: Ewing Stringfellow, Grant Davidson and Bob Tidball

Staff: Judy Herring, Eric Nelson, Steve Evans, Laurie Clinton, King County Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) Agriculture Programs

Guest Agency Staff: Bob Burns, Deputy Director KCDNRP; Karen Wolf, KC Executive Staff; Dave Marks, Manager KC Fairgrounds; Greg Stegman, Water Resources Program, WA Dept. of Ecology (DOE); and Josh Monaghan, King Conservation District (KCD)

Guests: Ann Mack, Dave Duff, Judy Taylor, Will Knedlik, Tom Quigley, Marguerite Sutherland and Michael Tanksley

Chair Judy Duff called the meeting to order at 4:03pm. She began by requesting approval of the agenda with the addition of roll call and allowing a five-minute break between the Muller Property and Water Law presentation.

**Motion 01-0504** Michael Blakely made the motion to accept the agenda as amended and Ben seconded. Motion passed.

**Roll Call** – those present above identified themselves and those absent noted as shown above.

**Commission Roundabout**

Michael Blakely reported about her role as a board member of Tilth of Washington. They are sponsoring “Farm Walks” featuring the flea beetle problem. This is a pest that is becoming prevalent throughout the state and there isn’t anything that is particularly safe to use against them.

Ben Kodama recently provided his expertise on greenhouse construction and utilization for growing plants to students through his involvement with the Environmental Science course at Evergreen High School.

Roger Calhoon said that as everyone already knows, the growing season is early this year with strawberries ripe and ready for picking. He is looking for a crew chief and requested any referrals.

Nancy Hutto participated in the Spring Fair at Puyallup. She is spending a few days a week in her booth at Pike Place Market and is helping to try and find a solution to the produce compost issue.

Dick Gradwohl attended the WSU Direct Marketing of Beef Workshop held in Omak, on April 29<sup>th</sup>. He brought back a workshop manual for the Commission and made copies of the PowerPoint presentation given by C.J. Mucklow from Colorado State University Extension for all Commissioners. He learned quite a bit about direct marketing of beef and realized how helpful a workshop like this would be for beef raisers in this area.

Gaylia Bullock also participated in the first event of the season which is the Spring Fair in Puyallup. Sarah Smith, WSU Extension Agent from Eastern WA taught a Quality Assurance class there that was well attended. Gaylia and her husband traveled to Maryland to attend a grand event - the Sheep & Wool Festival - which is similar to the Extravaganza here, except much larger, featuring about 1000 head of wool sheep and nine large barns full of individual booths selling wool, craft items and cooking booths.

George Irwin announced the FFA State convention is currently underway so the kids are there working hard. At the Spring Fair the youth competitors earned a little over \$1.00 a pound on 30 head of cattle, about \$3.00 a pound on about 67 head of sheep, and approximately 280 hogs at just over \$1.40 a pound. All the money goes back to the kids to support their supervised agriculture experience through 4-H and FFA.

Judy Duff shared the progress on a new program her farm is involved with through her church called the “Farm Share Hand in Hand for Daily Bread”. Judy and her husband Dave helped create this new program to help farmers and help those in need. The church organizes people to work on various farms one Sunday afternoon a month. Duffield Farm for instance, then donates six CSA shares to families in need.

### **Approval of Minutes**

**Motion 02-0304** Michael made the motion to accept the March minutes and George seconded. Motion passed.

### **Commission Business**

**Staff report:** Laurie handed out the current Commission roster and requested any edits. She passed around the card for the Commission to choose their top three choices in changing the times for upcoming meetings, which will now be three hours. She will give the results when they are tallied after this meeting. The upcoming June meeting has been scheduled for the Issaquah Fish Hatchery from 4:00 – 7:00 PM because it was necessary to reserve it in advance. She reviewed the available locations for upcoming meetings and the tentative schedule proposed for the coming year. She also requested Commissioners let her know if they think of other places. The Commission had expressed the desire to meet at different locations throughout the year so this schedule was made in accordance with that. Laurie said that after reviewing the discussion from the last meeting, she suggested that the Commission meet two months in a row at every location to provide ample opportunity for farmers in those areas to attend. Enumclaw was selected as the first two months so that if the Commission agreed they would hold a July meeting during the Fair, on July 22, Thursday, at the Field House. This was put under Old Business for a motion to approve.

Laurie mentioned the request from WRIA 9, Green-Duwamish Watershed Coordinator for the Livestock Committee seat. She will also send the email with details to everyone.

Laurie provided a summary of the Ag Commission Orientation held on April 20 from 9:00am – 4:00pm. She said there was a lot of information and materials given to the Commissioners that day. The agenda included an overview of KC Agriculture Programs; overview of the GMA, Comprehensive Plan, Land Use and zoning; permitted use table exercises and presentations on Agriculture Drainage Assistance Program (ADAP), Farmlands Preservation Program (FPP) and the Public Benefit Rating System (PBRs). Laurie noted how nice it was of current members Michael and George and past Commissioner Tom Quigley to attend. She also thanked her co-workers for their help, with special appreciation to Rick Reinlasoder who helped with every aspect to make the day a success.

**Public Comment** was moved until after the Sammamish discussion.

### **Muller Property / Sammamish APD/FPP discussion**

Judy Duff requested that a recap of the Muller property be given before the presentation started since most of the Ag Commissioners were not familiar with the area or the issues.

Bob Burns and Karen Wolf began their discussion by handing out materials on the “Farm and Fields Project” which involves Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) properties within the Agriculture Production District (APD) in the Sammamish Valley. Karen said they had spoken about this with a couple members individually and had met with a small group of the Ag Commission last year. They presented the project overview explaining: the Memorandum of Understanding (MOA) between King County and the Lake Washington Youth Soccer Association; location of properties in proposal; current ownership of those parcels; and the goals of the project. Bob explained the parcels as they appear on the map handed out. They explained the proposed trade for Parcel B and 60 acres South giving descriptions and situations of those properties and the mechanics of the trade such as completion of appraisals and the necessary KC ordinance to approve the trade. There was discussion on the parcel appraisals and if they would include comparable properties and current use as well as wetland determinations and soil conditions.

Removal of Parcel A from the Farmlands Preservation Program was described citing criteria for removal and the mechanics of removal which would be an Ordinance to the KC Council to authorize a public vote, and then a vote in a future public election.

There was lengthy discussion on the past and current use of the properties; conditions of the land; zoning and jurisdictional locations; the Soccer Association's actions; and the intricacies of the proposed property trade. There were also questions on Parcel C - which has the cow barn, other outbuildings and the house – and comments on the benefit to the farmland of having Parcel C included in the swap. Karen explained why this project is thought to strengthen the longevity and integrity of the APD. They said they believed that the criteria for this project is very tight so that it is not exposing the FPP to any threats to its solidity by opening it up to a county wide vote.

Bob and Karen provided details on the next steps and said they would appreciate hearing the Ag Commissions opinion. Due to this being the first time the Commission had heard about this project it was decided to spend more time on it at the June and July meetings. Bob and Karen agreed that the timing would work since it will go to Council in June. There was clarification that this is a two ordinance proposal, if the Council approves both ordinances, the measure to remove Parcel A from the Farmland Preservation Program would go before the public for vote.

Judy thanked Bob and Karen for their work and for coming to the Commission. Karen said they would work with staff to get some of the historical information on these properties. She also said that the Executive and Council always inquire about the Ag Commissions views on agricultural issues. She knows the Ag Commission's input will be requested and valued on this issue.

Since this is new, and most of the Commission is new, Judy requested ample background on this issue and to allow time for more discussion and public comment at the June meeting with the goal being a decision by the Commission for a recommendation on the Farms and Field Project at the July meeting.

### **Public Comment**

Will Knedlik is the lessee of Parcel A and wished to be viewed as a tenant farmer. He commended Bob Burns for the excellent job he has done on this project in regards to Parcel B. Mr. Knedlik said that the parcel he leases is an extremely valuable piece of farmland, despite what the Soccer Association has said for years. He has done soil core tests down to 16-18" that shows the excellent soil conditions. His Institute for Multiple Gain Agriculture works cooperatively with the Lake Washington Environmental School to have students work and study on genuine wetlands farming. He feels the property is the best 37 acres for agro-ecological work in the entire state. He is also very concerned that as a tenant he has been excluded from the process.

Judy Taylor brought to the Commission's attention that the State did decide to fund the bypass study to take Hwy. 164 through the Green APD. She will provide updates for Commission and asked that the Commission will hopefully be able to participate in that process.

Regarding the Farm and Fields issue, she implored the Ag Commission to learn all the facts. She said that private groups would continue to fight to take land out of the Farmland Preservation Program. Judy said that there is so much history with this, and she has been aware for years about these attempts. She said one of the key factors is to realize that the soccer association bought the property knowing that the deed said no soccer fields. She is also concerned about the zoning of Parcel C.

Ann Mack added that no matter how tight you make the ordinance, it does set a precedent, and can have very devastating consequences for the Farmland Preservation Program.

Tom Quigley said he feels that on the surface he thinks it is a pretty good deal for the Sammamish APD. Tom said he believes this project put the focus back on the entire APD, which will allow for better management. He offered to take any Ag Commissioner who is interested on a tour of the valley.

Mike Tanksley said this proposal is very detrimental to the Farmland Preservation Program and the APDs and what brought it about is blatant land speculation. He feels that if this goes through it would just be the beginning of the end of the agricultural protection policies and in just a few decades no one would ever know there was any attempt to preserve these properties. His children play soccer and his family

loves sports and he knows that more parks are needed; but he believes strongly that it should not be at the expense of farmland.

**5 minute break.**

### **Water Law**

Greg Stegman provided various handouts on water rights. He gave a PowerPoint presentation that assisted him in explaining a water right; water right doctrines; documentation; permit and certificates as well as the difference between them; water right claim; KC water rights; P's & Q's of water rights; date of priority; permitting system; changes to water rights; relinquishments; applicable and relevant RCW's; and the provisions and designations of Salmon Critical Basins and Instream Resources Protection Program. There was discussion on how to determine if a water right exists on any given property. Greg explained the vital importance of understanding that the property description matches that on the water right. He gave examples of situations where that has not been the case and the difficulties it can cause for a landowner. Greg said there have been pushes for change regarding water right permits. He also explained that the adjudication process, which requires the validity of a claim, can only be made in superior court. There was discussion of personal experiences with water issues, questions on how to avoid problems and how to learn if a water right exists. Greg encouraged Commissioners to call him with any questions or to talk more. The Commission thanked him for coming and for doing such a thorough presentation on the issue.

### **Old Business**

Committees were appointed. The Chair is an ex-officio member of all committees. Staff will be contacting members to set up the first meetings.

#### **\*Ag Programs**

**Staff:** Steve Evans & Sylvia Kantor  
Michael Blakely  
Ben Kodama  
Dick Gradwohl  
Grant Davidson

#### **\*Regulatory & Land Use**

**Staff:** Judy Herring  
Michael Blakely  
George Irwin  
Jason Roetcisoender  
Roger Calhoon  
Nancy Hutto  
Bob Tidball

#### **\*Livestock**

**Staff:** Laurie Clinton & Brad Gaolach  
George Irwin  
Gaylia Bullock  
Jason Roetcisoender  
Dick Gradwohl

Judy led the discussion on the grant approval process. She suggested that four Commissioners join the two staff members, Kathy Creahan and Judy Herring, to form the rating committee. The criteria form used in the past grant rounds will be sent to each person along with copies of each grant application. In order to expedite the process it was recommended that the rating committee review the applications, rate them and then meet for the decision on selecting applicants and how much to award them. This recommendation will come before the full Commission at the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting for final approval. George Irwin, Gaylia Bullock, Dick Gradwohl and Ben Kodama volunteered.

Laurie reviewed the proposed schedule for coming year. June was already decided for Issaquah due to meeting room reservation constraints. The proposed schedule was July, August in Enumclaw; September, October in Carnation; November, December in Covington or Kent; January, February in Issaquah; and March, April in Preston.

**Motion 03-0504** George made the motion to accept the schedule for upcoming year and Dick seconded. There was discussion on not having any time off during the year. July is the month the Commission has usually taken off due to the Fair. This year due to the Commission's expressed desire to solicit more farmer input, there will be a meeting in July at the Fairgrounds during the Fair. The Commission agreed it would like to see a plan of action at the June meeting on how to accomplish getting the public and farmers involved. **Motion passed.**

### **New Business**

Laurie collected the cards for voting on new time. She will report back in the Commission packet for the June meeting.

Judy Herring requested the Commission's approval on two re-appropriation requests for the 2004 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Supplemental Budget and handed out a paper explaining them. In King County, an appropriation of funds by the County Council is required before they can be spent. Judy H. explained the original source of FPP funds – from the 1979 FPP Bond and the Arts & Natural Resources Initiative from which the Council agreed to appropriate specific amounts to the five APDs. She explained the rationale for the first request, which is to maximize funds as matching funds when applying for grants. She is trying to capitalize the ability to use funds to maximize matching funds within the Enumclaw APD. The second request was to move lease revenue from farmlands that had been purchased with funding other than the 1979 FPP bond funds, to a separate account which would be used to maintain County-owned farmlands.

**Motion 04-0504** George made the motion to approve the request for re-appropriation of the FPP funds in the 2004 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. supplemental as outlined in section 1 of the re-appropriation of Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) funds notice that Judy Herring provided and Michael seconded. Motion passed. (*Re-appropriate \$325,000 that was previously appropriated for development rights acquisition in the Upper Green River Valley APD to the Enumclaw Plateau APD*)

**Motion 05-0504** George made the motion to approve section 2 of the re-appropriation of FPP funds notice as submitted by Judy H., Nancy seconded. Motion passed. (*Appropriate \$14,197.00 of lease revenue from County-owned farmlands from Project #384580 to Project #384203 so that this money can be used for an appraisal, maintenance and other non-capital projects on County-owned farmlands. The amount to be appropriated, \$14,197.00 is the amount of lease revenue that is not earmarked for development rights acquisition*)

Laurie thanked KC Fair Manager, Dave Marks for waiting to talk about Fair Plans, but time had run out for any discussion. The Commission agreed that she would work with Dave on ideas for Ag Commission involvement at the Fair. A draft plan will be sent to Commissioners before the June meeting to allow time for review. Final decisions will be made at the June meeting.

George wanted to be sure that mention was made of the Ag Commissioners who testified on the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) at Council last week. The Council Committee seems to be in favor of the language as currently written for agriculture. He said he's heard there will be a lot of discussion on the CAO at full council, but he believes the committee will recommend the ag language be accepted as written. Michael Blakely and Tom Quigley also testified.

**Meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.**